April 6th

Houston Texas March 1846

To Society of Inquiry

Dear Brethren

I have been absent from July the first till March the first & this will account for your letter of last September remaining so long unanswered. I found it necessary to leave my Station & go among Northern friends for aid that we might finish our church & release it from debt.

I rejoice that I can say that I nearly succeeded & in the meantime the Presbyterian interest & general wealth of the place have so increased that we expect with God's blessing to sustain ourselves & soon be able to pay back into the treasury of the Lord all that we have asked from others. Since your letter was written annexation has been fully consummated & Texas has become one portion of a great whole, thus adding to our own country more than 300,000 square miles of territory. To settle this territory thousands are now coming from the north & from Europe. It is supposed that the population of this country will double this year. Many of these settlers are moral & religious people, many of them more than usually enterprising. Many of them Presbyterians. My own church membership has more than doubled from immigration alone during the past winter. None of our new states will probably increase in population & wealth as rapidly as this & who shall preach the gospel to our teeming thousands is a momentous question. Several important places even now need to be occupied but we have not the men to do so. I know not why it is that a country so important for prospective wealth & magnitude & especially

on account of its locality & certain influence upon a large portion of the Western Continent, the key to Mexico & Central America, the path by which civil & religious freedom must visit the abodes of the Man of Sin, is so neglected by our own Church. Is it because there is so much wickedness here that our ministry does not encounter it? Or is it that we have not any longer the devotion, the self sacrificing spirit of Presbyterianism in other days? It will require sacrifice to preach the gospel in any new country, but probably no more in Texas than anywhere else. There is I think a disposition here to look upon Presbyterianism favorably. It is a general remark that it is the most moral, most doctrinal, part of the religious family. The Methodists are the most numerous, but their system of bringing in so many hastily, who soon fall away works against them. Wherever a Presbyterian Church, with an educated pious minister, can be sustained for a few years, along side Methodism the result is almost always favorable to us. This is beginning to be obvious here, & at Galveston, & especially at New Orleans.

Romanism is here. At Galveston she is preparing to build a Cathedral with money donated by the queen of France, to open also a Seminary & a nunnery. In Houston they have a chapel, but her professors are principally Germans & effect little or no influence on the world.

Most of the Romanists in the country are Germans — not the worst sort of Catholics, & had we the men to go among them they would generally hear them. The Roman church would if possible fill up & hedge up this pathway to Mexico, her stronghold on the Western Continent, & well she may wish. For her own sons she ought if possible keep protestant eyes from looking

upon her shame, her hideous deformity.

This week the Presbytery of Brazos closed its Sessions here. Four ministers were present who were members, one licentiate was ordained, the first ordination by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery which I believe ever occurred in this country. One also was present as a corresponding member. Three members were absent, & there probably are three others of one denomination in the county who have not joined. O how sad! Ye who are proposing to settle at home, often and neighborhoods where there are too many ministers, think of us who have to travel from one to three hundred miles to Presbytery & go too fearing when you arrive there will not be enough for a quorum. My nearest brother is 80 miles away—

You have an impression that this country is unhealthy. This is true only of the coast country, but as soon as you reach the rolling lands you come to a rich, & beautiful & healthy country, with perhaps fewer local causes of disease than in any State that I have seen. The sun is hot but its heat is tempered by a constant breeze all over the country. I visited western Texas last Spring and a more beautiful, or an apparently more healthy country I never saw. You have no impression that vice is rampant, life insecure, law no restraint. This is not so. Perhaps in none of our new States is religious more on the advance than in Texas.

But I close my letter. I regret that I cannot make it more interesting, but I am tired. Have just closed a communion season when several united with the Church & many more are serious, & every hour is occupied.

May God pour out his Spirit upon you.

Yours in closest bonds

J. W. Millard

Rec'd Apr. 30th
1846
Ans'd Oct. 20th 1846

Society of Inquiry
Theo. Seminary
Princeton
New Jersey.

HOUSTON
Apr. 10
TEXAS